

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1-7, 10 and 11 are pending in the application.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowability of claims 1-2, 5-7 and 10.

Claims 3 and 11 are amended to include the distinguishing characteristic which rendered claims 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 3-4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipate by FUJIMOTO et al (JP 2002-178178 A cited by applicant) as evidence by Dunskey et al (US 2001/0045419).

Applicants note the Examiners comment "The term *inward* narrowing spiral is not used in claims 3 or 11 making the claim broader than as in claim 1 and not distinguishing over the prior art of record."

In response, Applicants amend claims 3 and 11 to recite that the laser beam is guided to describe an inward narrowing spiral, thus distinguishing over the prior art of record in like manner to claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that all claims are thus now in condition for allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

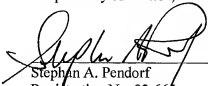
Claims 1-2, 5-7 and 10 are allowed.

It is respectfully submitted that, by the amendments to claims 3 and 11 discussed above, all claims are thus now in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection and early issuance of the Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. Should further issues remain, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the indicated telephone number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required at any time during the prosecution of this application without specific authorization, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 16-0877.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: **December 3, 2010**